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General Assembly
Fifty-second Session

Official Records

46th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 5 November 1997, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Udovenko ..... (Ukraine)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 15 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(b) Election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council

The President: This afternoon, the General Assembly will continue with the election of 18 members of the Economic and Social Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 1997.

As members may recall, when the 43rd plenary meeting was adjourned on Monday, 3 November, there still remained one seat from among the Latin American and Caribbean States to be filled.

Before we continue with the next round of balloting, I give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Guillén (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In this election process, Peru has not sought re-election, but rather election, because we believe in the principle of rotation. Our country did not seek to create the current situation. It is the result of alliances that have created a context that gives the impression that Peru is contesting the seat of Saint Lucia, the country that would like to accede to Jamaica's seat, since Jamaica has not sought re-election. Peru does not want to give this impression of standing in the way of Saint Lucia's candidacy. During these elections we have requested and have been given the constant support of a relative majority of the General Assembly. However, in order to get beyond this impasse, Peru has decided not to participate in the round of voting is about to be initiated.

We are extremely grateful to all the members of the General Assembly that have supported Peru, and we want to state that this year we will not insist on being elected. We will present our candidacy at next year's elections, bearing in mind the principle of rotation, by which all countries can participate on an equal basis.

The President: In accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure, we shall now continue with the series of restricted ballots.

This eighth round of balloting shall be restricted to those States from among the Latin America and the Caribbean States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Peru and Saint Lucia. However, in proceeding with the balloting members will take into consideration the statement that has just been made by the representative of Peru.

Ballot papers marked "D" will now be distributed. May I request representatives to write on the ballot papers the name of the State for which they wish to vote. Ballot papers marked "D" for the Latin American and Caribbean States will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than what was mentioned by the representative of Peru. You heard the same thing I did.

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I call on the representative of Peru on a point of order.

Mr. Guillén (Peru): According to my interpretation of the procedure, Mr. President, you would have to present the name of Peru, even though Peru has declared that it will not contest the seat that is now up for election. We have done this for principles of solidarity and in order to respect the principle of rotation. I think the voting should proceed.

The President: I thank the representative of Peru for his clarification and his cooperation.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Silva (Angola), Mr. Thinley (Bhutan), Mr. Jerónimo (Portugal) and Mrs. Kimliková (Slovakia) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 3.35 p.m. and resumed at 3.50 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group D — Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	166
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	166
Abstentions:	4
Number of Members voting:	162
Required two-thirds majority:	108
Number of votes obtained:	
Saint Lucia	135
Peru	27

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, Saint Lucia was elected a member of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1998.

The President: I congratulate Saint Lucia on its election as a member of the Economic and Social Council.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Ambassador and the Government of Peru for their cooperation.

The following 18 States have thus been elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1998: Algeria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, the Comoros, India, Italy, Lesotho, Mauritius, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, the United States of America and Viet Nam.

I would like to thank the tellers for their assistance in this election. Really, they have greatly contributed to this process.

I give the floor to the representative of Saint Lucia.

Ms. Leonce (Saint Lucia): I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Member States that supported Saint Lucia's candidacy for the Economic and Social Council. I would like to congratulate the other Member States that have been elected, including Brazil and Colombia from our region. I also recognize the gracious gesture of Peru to uphold the principle of rotation.

This was not a Saint Lucian issue, a Caribbean Community issue or even an Economic and Social Council issue. It was a United Nations issue of translating the principles of democracy from words on paper into reality. The United Nations sends missions to every far corner of the earth to establish, promote and preserve democracy. I strongly believe that democracy should begin here and now at the United Nations, allowing every Member State — whether big or small, white or black, rich or poor — the opportunity to participate in the work of this Organization in all its aspects.

Saint Lucia has, since its independence 18 years ago, faithfully contributed to this Organization without conditions, in full and on time. We feel that we are well capable and deserving of participation in the Organization's work in every aspect.

Thanks again to all Member States for their support.

The President: This concludes our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 15.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.